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Book accuses Kissinger of double-dealing in '68

By Raymond Coffey
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WASHINGTON—Henry Kissinger fed secret information from the Paris peace talks on the Vietnam War to Richard Nixon's 1968 presidential campaign in hopes of securing a job with the Nixon administration, according to a new book about Kissinger by Seymour Hersh, former New York Times reporter.

Hersh's book charges that while he was serving the Johnson administration as a consultant and informing the Nixon campaign behind the scenes, Kissinger also was criticizing Nixon personally and offering his services to Nixon's presidential rival, Hubert H. Humphrey.

Late Wednesday night, Kissinger denied that he had provided any inside information to either of the presidential candidates in 1968.

In an appearance on the ABC news program "Nightline," Kissinger, to whom brief portions of Hersh's book

were read, termed them a "slimy lie." Kissinger added that he had not read the book himself.

Kissinger added that Hersh had relied on "totally interested witnesses," including some who had been "dismissed after a year on my staff." He termed the book a "disgrace."

IN AN APPEARANCE on the NBC program "Today," Hersh said that, in collecting information for his book, he had spoken with 1,000 people in and out of government.

As for "the story about the double-dealing [with Humphrey and Nixon]," Hersh said: "I quote John Mitchell by name. I quote Richard Allen who was the national security adviser by name. I talked to people who worked inside the Humphrey camp by name."

Responding to Kissinger's accusation that the author had also talked to some individuals who had been dismissed by Kissinger from the National Security Council staff and sub-

sequently become embittered, Hersh replied, "I think most people who worked closely with Henry Kissinger, unfortunately, left embittered."

In this book, Hersh writes that Nixon and Kissinger both refused his repeated requests for interviews. There was no comment on the book from Nixon.

The book, "The Price of Power: Kissinger in the Nixon White House," is to be published June 13 by Summit Books. It is a four-year project by the reporter, who won a Pulitzer Prize for his reporting on the My Lai massacre in Vietnam.

KISSINGER LATER served Nixon as secretary of state and national security adviser.

Hersh reports that in 1970, after Palestinian guerrillas had hijacked four airliners and threatened to blow up the planes and their passengers in Jordan, Nixon ordered U.S. Navy jets to attack guerrilla hideaways.

"There is no evidence that Kissinger raised any objections to the order," Hersh writes, adding that only indirect and disguised disobedience of the order by then Defense Secretary Melvin Laird prevented it from being carried out.

Laird, Hersh says, simply pleaded that "bad weather" made the attack

impossible and explained later that "the secretary of defense can always find a reason not to do something," and that "we had bad weather for 48 hours."

Hersh also alleges that former Indian Prime Minister Moraji Desai was paid \$20,000 a year by the Central Intelligence Agency during the administration of Lyndon Johnson and that Desai was the "secret informant" on whom Nixon and Kissinger depended heavily in advance of the 1971 India-Pakistan war and this country's subsequent diplomatic "tilt" toward Pakistan.

In Bombay, the Press Trust of India news agency quoted Desai as calling the allegation "a mad thing" and threatening to sue for defamation if the book were published in India, according to Reuter news service.

HE ALSO CHARGES that Nixon and Kissinger had agreed on a "madman" strategy for trying to end the Vietnam War, a theory based on giving the North Vietnamese reason to think Nixon might be irrational at times and thus scare them into thinking he might try anything.

This theory, according to the book, led to an ultimatum to the North Vietnamese to either reach a settlement or face a massive escalation of the war.

It also led, Hersh writes, to Kissinger's staff preparing highly secret studies, code-named "Duck Hook," that called for the massive bombing of North Vietnam, including the option of a nuclear attack.

But the "Duck Hook" strategy was kept secret, Hersh writes, while Nixon and Kissinger were talking in public about their efforts to negotiate a Vietnam peace accord.

The book also charges that Nixon abandoned an agreement that Kissinger did reach with the North Vietnamese in 1972 because his pollster advised him it could cost him the presidential election that year.